

A Tale of Two Rivals

by Dragonel

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Summary: Strage events surrounding Ash & Co. lead to an interesting discovery... regarding Ash's true origins.....

A Tale of Two Rivals

> <meta name="Author"> A Tale of Two Rivals - Part 1 NEWBIE ALERT!
NEWBIE ALERT! Okay, my first good fanfic, at least, according to
some.... if you think it's good, tell me and I'll post more! Give me
any C/C, but no flames. My Charizard'll eat those. ^-^
>This fic simply introduces the plot. I'll get to the good bits
soon enough! And it also hints at some Pok  Shippyness. ^_~

>Oh, one more note: almost all my fics have a Mew involved. So
it's my fave, so sue me!
>What? You wanna read the fic? Really? *grins* Okay! Onward
ho!

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The troupe reached yet another island. Ash Satoshi Ketchum had just earned his second Orange League badge from Danny of Naval Island. It wasn't an easy competition, but he was incredibly determined to win. Strange. It wasn't because he wanted to be better than any other trainer in the world this time. It was for another reason. He had admitted it to himself as he rode on Lapras away from Naval Island. He wanted to impress Misty Kasumi Waterflower.

The way she had looked at Danny when he greeted her so nicely. The way she wished him good luck on the mountain climb. The way she offered her blanket to him at the frozen top of the mountain. It infuriated him! Sure, he had good looks and manners, but... was it enough to ruin his chances with her? What a thought!

As he jumped off of his Water/Ice Pokémon and returned it to its PokéBall, the question burned in his mind like a Magmar swimming in lava. What did he truly feel about the redhead Gym Leader? It could be but a mere crush. It could be a passing phase. Or it could be--

"Earth to Ash! Hel-LO? Do you read me?" Misty questioned, irritated. Ash snapped out of his trance and turned to her. Of course, he thought she was quite beautiful, despite what her sisters said.

"Hey Ash," Kenji Baka Sketchit said. (AN: Okay, I'm mean. But I really don't like Kenji in any way, shape or form!) "It's starting to get late. We should set up a camp in those woods. Could you go find some firewood?"

"Hey, why me? I got the firewood last time! It's Misty's turn!" retorted Ash.

Misty laughed. "I have to feed Togepi now. Looks like you get to go hunting for logs again!"

"Togi Togi!" [Funny, Mommy!] Togepi squealed happily from Misty's arms. The young Water trainer smiled, gave Ash an evil grin, then sat on a rock and took out Togepi's food. Ash sighed, then promptly sat on the ground, hunched over.

"I never get a break," he groaned.

"Pi, Pika Pi! Pikachu!" [Hey, Ash! I'll join you!] the electric mouse squeaked. She trotted over to her best friend's side and looked up at his face with a grin. Instead of getting a smile back, Pikachu found herself staring at the back of her trainer's head. Pikachu frowned and said, "Pika Pi? Kachu Ka?" [Ash? You listening?] Again, no reply. What in the world could have caught his attention so much? Pikachu wondered. She peered around his trainer. There was Misty, seated on a rock near the shore and feeding Togepi. The sunset made a very nice backdrop.

It clicked in Pikachu's mind. She glanced at his friend's face to be sure... yup, there was no doubt! Judging by the goofy love-struck Brock-trademark smile on Ash's face, the electric mouse concluded that...

"Pika Pi Chuuu! Pika Pi Chuuu!" [Ash loves Misty! Ash loves Misty!] she sang as she danced around.

Fortunately, no one but Ash could understand Pikachu's PokéLanguage. Unfortunately, Ash heard it. He proceeded to turn redder than his cap, and shot a glare at his Pokémon. "What's that supposed to mean?!" he said in a hushed whisper.

"What's what supposed to mean?" That was Misty. Ash whirled around and sweatdropped. She was watching him with curiosity, waiting for an answer.

"Oh, heh heh, it's nothing, n-n-nothing at all!" he replied quickly. "Pikachu was just teasing me, eh heh heh..."

A smirk grew on Misty's face. "Was she teasing you about Charizard?" Now that would make him tick.

Ash fell over with a crash. Just as quickly, he jumped up again.
"Gimme a break, Misty!"

"Well, isn't it true that Charizard gives you nothing but trouble?"
Misty asked coolly. She continued to feed Togepi.

"Well..... I, uh..... um....." Ash was having a hard time with this one. He knew she was right, but to admit it in front of her face? Over his dead body he would! He tried to think of a comeback, but Misty interrupted him.

"No response, huh? I guess that proves it! Face it Ash, you still need more experience to become a decent trainer."

The trainer from Pallet was taken aback. She doesn't even think I'm a decent trainer? After all I've been through?! After placing sixteenth... two Orange League badges... sixteenth... two... An awful realization snapped in his mind. In the huge world that was a trainer's journey, those were pretty low numbers. Not only that, Charizard was unruly. He hadn't captured many Pok mon. He didn't exactly win all of his badges. Every ounce of self-esteem that had once filled his body had drained out of him. The most he could do right there was stay rooted to the spot and fight back dejected tears.

Misty waited for the usual comeback that she could easily stomp flat. But she only got an eerie silence. She looked in Ash's direction. Her heart lurched. He looked like a Pok mon who had just been abandoned in the darkest alley imaginable. Misty dropped Togepi's food and tried to say something, but her breath was caught in her throat. _I think I've gone too far this time..._

Kenji stopped unpacking to see what was going on. The first thing he saw was an incredibly worried Misty and Pikachu, then a very unhappy Ash. _Uh oh, I see trouble._

Pikachu couldn't believe Misty had said that! She had hit the one spot that was most important to Ash: what he and other people thought of his training skills. Of course, she had done that before, but that was with a BB gun. This time, her insults seemed to have been shot with the world's biggest bazooka.

A quick sob escaped Ash's throat. He tried covering it up by pretending to cough. However, his friends weren't convinced.

"Pika Pi..." Ash saw his best friend tugging at his pant leg and gently smiling. Some of the sadness left him, and he managed to flash a smile. A wave of relief washed over Pikachu. "Pika Pikachu Pi Pi Chuuu Pikachu! Pika Pikachu Cha Pi?" [I know you're a great trainer! Why don't we try to show Charizard that?]

"But, he might get out of control. What'd I do then?" he asked.

"Pika Pikachu! Pika Pika!" [Leave that to Pikachu! Now let's go train!] With that, Pikachu ran into the nearby woods. Ash laughed. He was glad that he had gotten Pikachu as his first Pok mon. Their bond had become strong over the years. If only he had that kind of bond with Misty..

"Ash, what about the firewood?" Kenji asked.

"Sorry Kenji, but I'm off to tame Charizard!" he declared as he ran after Pikachu. "Let Misty get it! It's her turn anyway!" he hollered.

Misty groaned.

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"Charizard, come out!" A PokéBall flew from Ash's hand and hit the ground. It clicked open and released white energy. The energy formed into a red dragon, who was lying on the ground as usual.

(AN: Since I don't really know what to make Charizard say, I'm just gonna put it's translations. What, he doesn't say "Charizard", he growls!)

[Leave me alone, I was having a nice nap!] Charizard complained. Ash could understand all of his Pokémon, though it took a few seconds to translate in his head.

"Listen to me Charizard. If you would only obey me, I know we'd make a great team!"

The fire Pokémon snorted. [What makes you think I'm gonna obey a human any day?! You No-Powers haven't done anything for me.]

"Uh... No-Powers?" Ash said, confused.

"Pikachu Kachuuuu Pika Pika." [That's what we call humans.]

"Why?"

"Pikachu Pika!" [You don't have any special abilities!] Ash fell over.

"Waa, that's not the point!"

[I don't want to hear the point. Go away.]

"No, I'm not going away! If I'm gonna be the best trainer ever, I'm not going to back down!"

Charizard rose onto his hind legs. He was obviously cross. [I suggest you do back down, No-Power.]

"And stop calling me that! We used to be best friends..."

[I was never friends with you, and I don't intend to be friends! Now leave me ALONE!] Charizard let a Flamethrower loose and directed it at Ash. The trainer was promptly burnt to a crisp.

"Pikachu! PIKA Pikachu PIKA PI Cha!!" [Charizard! YOU leave ASH alone!] Pikachu cried, getting into a battle stance. Before Charizard could react, the electric mouse charged up and released a powerful Thunderbolt. The fire dragon screamed in pain, but recovered rather quickly. Soon, a no trainer battle had started between

them.

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A certain water trainer trudged through the woods, searching for logs, sticks, anything to start a campfire with. Kenji was taking care for Togepi while she was gone. She couldn't keep her mind on the job, however. She only thought of what she said to Ash.

Nice going, Baka-Misty! she insulted herself. _Now you've probably ruined any chance with him at all! Oh, why did I have to fall in love with him of all people? I mean, he's only cute... and nice to his PokÃ©mon... and an overall great guy... I wish he felt the same. But after what I said.. why do I even bother hoping?_

A small tear glided down Misty's cheek and dropped to the ground below. She stood in one spot for a while, brooding over her confused thoughts and feelings. She loved him, that was the truth. Ever since--

"PIKA Pikachu PIKA PI Cha!!"

Startled, Misty dropped her small load of firewood. "Oh, must be a wild Pikachu," she figured. She bent down to pick up the wood again, when.... she thought about what that Pikachu said. The words literally echoed in her mind over and over again.

"PIKA.." YOU..

"Pikachu.." Leave alone..

"PIKA PI!" ... ASH!

"I understood that...?" Misty wondered aloud. She could never understand any PokÃ©mon before, not even Togepi. What happened? "You leave alone Ash? You leave Ash alone?! Oh no! Ash is in trouble!" Without a second thought, Misty ran in the direction she thought the Pikachu's voice came from, leaving the pile of sticks behind.

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Charizard bellowed as he charged up another FlameThrower. Pikachu ran in circles, gathering speed for an Agility. Ash was off to the side, not knowing what to do. These were his strongest PokÃ©mon fighting; his other PokÃ©mon might not stand a chance! "Pikachu! Return!" he cried.

"Pika Pi-- CHAA!!" [Ash-- AAAA!!] A well placed Slash attack sent Pikachu hurtling into a tree and knocking her out.

"No, Pikachu!!" Ash practically screamed. He turned to Charizard with an angry frown. There was no chance of taming the beast now. He was completely out of control! He whipped out a PokÃ©Ball. "Charizard, return NOW!" he shouted angrily.

Charizard quickly flew up. He ducked and weaved around the many red beams that were trying to suck him into the ball. Not this time! This was his chance to be free from the No-Power! He pulled a U-turn, opened his jaws to reveal several sharp teeth, then hurtled down

toward his "ex-trainer".

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Misty peeked her head over the bushes. She saw a medium-sized clearing, with a battling Charizard and Pikachu smack dab in the middle. They were fighting intensely! Pikachu was dodging left and right. She seemed to have the upper hand, but Charizard got smart and aimed a Slash attack just right. Pikachu flew into a tree and was unconscious.

"No, Pikachu!!" Misty saw Ash on the other side, looking completely horrified of Charizard's actions. Who could blame him? She watched as her friend tried desperately to return the out-of-control animal to his PokéBall. Charizard flew back and forth, each beam barely missing him.

"Ash! Let me help!" Misty called as she ran to his side. Ash looked surprised, but grinned.

"Thank goodness you're here! Lapras and Squirtle aren't powerful enough to take him on," he reported.

"Maybe Staryu and Starmie are!" Misty pulled out two PokéBalls and pulled her arm back to throw them. Then, Ash suddenly gave out a cry. She turned her attention to Charizard.

He was gonna try to Bite Ash!

Every muscle in her body froze. She couldn't do anything! Her love was going to die! "Charizard, NOOO!!!" she screamed.

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As Ash braced himself for his Pokémon's Bite, he shut his eyes tight and remembered when he first saw Charmander, weak and near death...

FLASHBACK ALERT!!

"Oh no! Its tail flame is almost out!" Ash shouted over the heavy rain.

"I'll carry it to the Pokémon center," Brock Takeshi Slate said, gently lifting the limp Charmander's form.

Ash took off his poncho and held it over the tiny flame. "I'll make sure its tail flame stays lit!"

Misty and Pikachu ran alongside Brock and Ash, praying they'd make it in time...

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"CHAAARRRR!!!" Ash heard Charmander cry. He also heard flames roaring with pure heat. Peering over the edge of the hole, he saw a completely cooked Team Rocket! They dropped the balloon Pikachu was trapped in, and ran for their lives, screaming.

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"Boo hoo hooo, mommy!" Damien wailed. Charmander had rejected the

trainer who had abandoned him. He Tail Whipped the PokéBall into Damien's face. And it felt good. After some talking, he happily jumped into Ash's PokéBall.

FLASHBACK'S DONE

Charizard's mind was flooded with these memories. He remembered that awful Damian No-Power. He remembered being lost on an island with Pikachu, Squirtle and Bulbasaur. He remembered battling Koga's Golbat. He remembered keeping Ash warm in an ice cave. He remembered everything. He hovered in mid-air just in front of his trainer. Ash. The No-Power who loved him so much, he bothered saving his life.

Tears clouded Charizard's vision.

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"Huh? No bite?" a bewildered Ash said. He carefully opened his eyes. Charizard had landed, and was grinning. He appeared to be crying. "Charizard... you okay?"

Misty stared in amazement at the fire dragon. Why did he stop? And why was he crying?

Pikachu shook her head, making sure all of her brain cells were in place. She watched in amazement as Charizard began to speak.

[I'm okay now, Ash.] he replied happily.

"Waaa! You spoke English, I swear!" cried Ash.

"I can understand it too!" said Misty, just as surprised.

"And you didn't call me a No-Power. What's going on?"

[Ash, I'm sorry for being so unruly. Evolving so quickly messed up my memory. Now, I.. I want to be friends again!] Charizard playfully nuzzled Ash in the shoulder.

"But.. what... how?!" Ash couldn't be more confused. (As usual. ^_^)

Charizard explained. [Images of my life as a Charmander appeared in my head. I remember everything now! Though I don't quite know how...]

Confused and amazed beyond belief, Ash chose to faint now, sort things out later.

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[Ash? Ash! Wake up!]

Ash moaned softly before opening his eyes. He knew he was lying down, and he was on his sleeping bag. The first thing he saw was a pair of black shining eyes filled with concern. Pikachu. [Hey Ash, you feeling okay?]

"Uuhhh... huh? Pikachu.. you speak English too?" Ash asked

incredulously. He sat up to get a better view. Night had fallen, and a campfire was blazing in the woods near the beach. All of his friends were watching him, relieved that he was okay. Even Charizard was smiling!

"What are you talking about? She said something like, 'Pika Pi, Pikachu,' " Kenji said.

"No, she didn't," replied Ash. "She just talked to me in plain English. No Pikas or anything!"

"That's what I heard too!" Misty confirmed, eyes wide. She instinctively held a hand to her forehead. "No fever. I didn't hit my head or anything. Hey Ash, tell me if this hurts." She punched him in the head. Ash grimaced and gave out a tiny yelp.

"Of course it hurts!" he shouted.

"Misty! What was that for?!" Kenji chided.

"Well, he might have hit his head when he fainted, and it's making him delusional," she answered innocently.

Pikachu shook her head. Her mouth was wide open, and her eyes were so wide, you could see their true color, dark brown. [Misty, he's not delusional. Neither are you,] she said in a solemn voice. This worried everyone; all of their attention turned to her.

[So he's learned to understand us. So has Misty. So what?] Charizard wondered.

[Charizard, doesn't the fact that they aren't hearing our language make it significant?]

Charizard thoughtfully put a claw to his chin and tilted his head upward. [I suppose so,] he concluded.

[Also, you said you suddenly remembered everything you went through as a Charmander!]

[Well, yeah...]

There was a dramatic pause before Pikachu continued. [How? How do you think that happened?]

By this time, Kenji had given up on trying to understand what was going on and went off to sketch the horizon. Ash and Misty listened intently to the Pokémon's conversation. Togepi was sleeping peacefully in Misty's backpack.

[... I can't explain it, Pikachu,] Charizard replied. Suddenly, Pikachu whirled around and faced Ash with a determined look.

[Ash, what were you thinking about just before Charizard began to obey you? Give me every detail! This is important!] she demanded.

Ash was a bit surprised. Pikachu had never talked to him this way before; must be really important! "Um, well... Charizard was about to use Bite on me.... I heard Misty tell Charizard to stop...."

Misty blushed ever so slightly.

".. then I started thinking about when Charmander was here. And how much I wanted Charizard to remember," Ash finished.

Pikachu's heart frog-leaped into her throat. Her breath came in short gasps and she began to sweat. She sat down as tears welled up in her eyes. But these were not tears of sadness; they were tears of joy.

"Pikachu, I'm really confused!" Ash whined. "Could you please explain what in the world's happening to Misty and I?!"

The electric Pok  mon gazed at her human friends, glanced at Charizard, then said, [I hope you're ready for a long story...]

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2 B Continued.....

>Gol'. Long enough for ya? Great! Now review! And be nice, please. My Charizard isn't too hungry right now. >_" Ja ne!

>Email: dragonel@hotmail.com<a>

End
file.